

IN THE RELIGIOUS WORLD

What Church Folk Are Thinking About and Doing

A REFORMER KING.

The International Sunday School Lesson for January 15 is: "Asa's Good Reign in Judah." 2 Chron. 15:1-15.

(By WILLIAM T. ELLIS.)

"Like priest, like people"; good leaders mean good followers. It is rare for a nation to do as Portugal has lately done—get rid of an incompetent king and substitute a popular government. The more usual way is that of Greece; with a king unequal to the national emergencies, the people run hither and thither, bleating piteously like a flock of sheep without a shepherd. National leaders have a grave responsibility. In the ups and downs of the history of the Chosen People we see that good kings led the nation into righteousness, and lax or evil kings corrupted it.

Certain eternal principles run through the record of the life of the Jews. That is one reason why millions of persons study the Old Testament history who know little or nothing of the contemporary Greeks and Assyrians and Babylonians and Phoenicians and Syrians. In the life of Judah and Israel we learn God's ways with nations in their collective capacity. Broadly viewed, we see that he was trying to make them a clean and righteous people, and a people freed from the taint of idolatry, and steadfast in the worship of Jehovah. What was true of these ancient kingdoms, nearly three thousand years ago, is true of the Christian nations today.

A Good Son's Poor Parents.

When Asa came to the throne of Israel he had no moral inheritance to speak of. Apparently his father, Abijah, while calling on Jehovah when sore pressed in war, walked in the sins of his father Rehoboam. He left the land to his son filled with the abominations of the neighboring heathen. Even Asa's mother, Maacah, was an idolater; and we may pity the son who has not a good mother; he is worse off than the man with a foolish or wicked wife.

Real mettle is shown by the way a person deals with the natural conditions that surround him. Man-right is greater than birth-right. One may be born bad and become good, else is our religion vain. If children may be doomed by parents, then have we the nerveless and fatalistic East. Happily, nobody is doomed to walk in the way of anybody else. Every soul is a free agent. The Asas may break loose from the example and traditions of the Rehoboams and Abijahs and Maacahs.

Asa even dared remove his mother from her office as queen-mother. He destroyed the idol she had built and burnt it publicly. Loyalty to parents is one thing, but loyalty to God is another. There are no ties so sacred as those which bind the soul to Jehovah. The choice must sometimes still be made between those dear in the flesh and allegiance to the Most High. There is no peace or spirit-prosperity for the life that does not put God first.

The Hurt of Bad Neighbors.

A person needs a knowledge of music in order to enjoy to the full a fine orchestra; one must know history in order to get the full benefit of travel; and to understand the story of the life of the ancient Jews it is necessary to remember the conditions which surrounded them. They were sprung from the loins of an idol-maker. Their earliest conception of Jehovah was that of a tribal or family god, quite on the order of the other local gods of their neighbors. They had been schooled in idolatrous Egypt. The peoples who dwell near them all worshipped idols. They themselves had not got a good hold of the truth that there is but one God, universal and supreme.

Moreover—and this is important to bear in mind—the requirements of their God were more rigid than those to which their neighbors were subject in the worship of idols. The stern morality of monotheism did not sit comfortably upon them. All sorts of lavities and indulgences were not only permitted to the idolaters, but were a required part of their worship. Here we impinge upon the huge and hideous subject of the immoralities associated with idolatry. The Jews did not turn so often and so readily to the worship of trees and stones and high places and images, because they cared for these things in themselves, but because their lower natures craved the practices associated with them. Immorality was the fashion among the neighbors, and the fashion easily spread to the Jews.

A Reform Administration.

Asa started out to clean up his country. He began and ended with its religion. For the only reform that counts is that which deals with the deepest motor forces of individual life. The real reformer is the true preacher. A great evangelist is worth more to the nation than a po-

litical leader. Except the people be right with God it is impossible for them to be right with one another, or with other nations.

Asa cleared a path for Jehovah's return to Judah. He cut down the heathen groves, abolished the high places, destroyed the images, drove out the men corrupted with immoral practices, and pledged his nation to the service of Jehovah. It is an eternal law that Jehovah stands by all who stand for him; so Asa had victory over his enemies. National peace followed national purification; "good times" came in the wake of good people. Godliness proved great gain. If anybody wants to see illustrations of that same truth today, let him look at Scotland and Switzerland and Sweden, in contrast with some other nations which it would not be kind to name.

When the Revival Came.

One of the most baffling of pursuits is the search for causes of political and social actions. Usually they hark back to secret stirrings of the individual heart. Asa was moved by the word of a man of God, he was heartened for his work of reform by the preacher's sermon. The teacher and the preacher never can tell what true word of theirs is going to mean a turning point in the life of a hearer, with unmeasured consequences to the world. Asa is credited in history with this era of reform; but what about the man of God who spurred him on to it?

Something like a great revival of true religion came to Judah in the wake of Asa's devotion. There was a glorious assembly, with sacrifices and rejoicing, in old Jerusalem. The friends of God, with hearts made glad after long seasons of discouragements, resorted to Asa from all the land. Nobody had believed that there were so many true believers left; one good result of a revival is that it brings out the godly to be counted. We read that, in addition to Asa's convocation of his own people for the worship of Jehovah, "they fell to him out of Israel in abundance, when they saw that Jehovah his God was with him."

The exhortation to Asa and Judah is still good counsel for today: "Be ye strong, and let not your hands be slack; for your work shall be rewarded."

SEVEN SENTENCE SERMONS.

I know no failure, save failure in cleaving to the purposes which I know to be the best.—George Eliot.

O, never falter! peace must come by pain; Heaven is not found, but won.

—Samuel Johnson.

The space between a man's ideal and the man himself is his opportunity.—Margaret Deland.

The depth from which our words are spoken is the measure of the depth at which they will be heard.—Julian Hawthorne.

Sins of commission are the usual punishment for sins of omission; he that leaves a duty may well fear that he will be left to commit a crime.—Gurnall.

Thou canst not to thy place by accident.

It is the very place God meant for thee.

—Trench.

No impulse is too splendid for the simplest task; no task is too simple for the most splendid impulse.—Phillips Brooks.

UNDERDRAIN THE FEEDING LOT.

There is no good reason why the feed lot should not be kept in good condition even if there is no hill on the farm. If the land is level and only a small bunch of cattle is to be fed, a good plan is to remove the top soil with a road scraper to the depth of six inches or more, and then cover the surface with smooth stones topped off with coarse coal cinders mixed with sand.

Of course, the best way to keep a small feed lot dry is to pave it with brick. This costs something at the start, but the investment will pay every time. The cattle are always on dry footing, and no feed is wasted by being thrown on the ground.

If a large lot of cattle is to be fed, the cost of paving a large lot is out of the question; but it can be underdrained with success. Tile drain laid in the ordinary way, from 10 to 20 feet apart, will keep any lot that is not located in a swamp in good condition, even in the rainiest part of the season.

Drainage will cost no more than sheds, they soon become soaked with the driving rains and mud is then carried into them by the cattle, and are little better than an open lot.

On our own farm we have two lots of ten acres each, which are perfectly drained. They are on a slightly sloping rise, and we placed the drains about twenty feet apart. Perhaps forty feet would have answered the purpose, but we decided to take no chances, and are satisfied with our investment. These two lots cost us \$400 for tile and work, besides our own, but we think it has paid, because our cattle have been fattened in comfort.—C. M. Coulton.

PROSECUTION OF TOBACCO TRUST

North Carolinians Play Important Part

TAFT A LIKEABLE MAN

The President as Viewed by the Newspaper Man at the National Capital.

The National Tariff Commission to

Meet in Washington on the 11th and

12th—Senate Committee Will Prob-

ably Report on Amendment for Elec-

tion of Senators by Popular Vote, on

Monday.

By THOMAS J. PENCE.

Washington, D. C., Jan. 7.—The Supreme Court of the United States is now absorbed in the re-argument of the case of the Federal Government against the American Tobacco Company. It is one of the most famous and important of the Sherman anti-trust law prosecutions ever undertaken. The argument in this great case will not be concluded until the middle of next week, and then the court will begin consideration of the equally famous case for the dissolution of the Standard Oil Company.

North Carolinians play an important part in this greatest of all trust prosecutions that have been presented to the highest court in the land. The Dukes, of Durham and New York—probably the most interested of the defendants—are not present. The corporation which they created, and which, it is charged, represents a capital of \$400,000,000, is defended in the case before the Supreme Court of the United States by able and learned counsel. Conspicuous in the defense is W. W. Fuller, general counsel of the American Tobacco Company. Seated by his side is Junius Parker, another Tar Heel, who has won reputation in New York. Associated with them are Delancey Nicol and W. B. Hornblower, of New York. Representing the government are Assistant Attorney-General James C. McReynolds, who comes from Tennessee, and Attorney-General Wickersham. It is a splendid array of counsel that is battling before the court over the question as to whether or not the tobacco trust shall be dissolved.

The North Carolina colony is well represented at the hearing. Senator Overman and other members of the delegation are to be seen inside the reservation for members of the bar.

Personally, President Taft is a most likeable man. Despite the mistakes he may have made—that is, the estimate of him entertained by the average newspaper man. There is a humane side to the occupant of the White House that appeals to the scribes here at the National Capital. They have discovered this in the weekly meetings that he has with members of the Fourth Estate in the cabinet room at the White House executive offices. Around the cabinet table, Mr. Taft meets the newspaper men every Tuesday. Political subjects and the gossip of the day are the subjects that figure in the conversation. The President is free and easy with his visitors, and readily answers questions submitted to him. He knows he is safe in doing this, for there is not a newspaper man in the city who would quote him. The President of the United States is never interviewed. That is the first thing a newspaper man learns when he comes to Washington.

The National Tariff Commission, of which D. A. Tompkins, of Charlotte, is vice-president, will meet here January 11-12. There will be delegates in attendance from nearly every State in the Union. The association is seeking to secure the establishment of a permanent tariff commission. There will be a banquet, at which the President will be present and deliver an address. Republican leaders in Congress are endeavoring to secure the enactment of legislation for the establishment of the proposed commission, but it is doubtful whether they can accomplish their purpose. The Democrats have opposed the creation of a tariff commission. Certainly no such legislation can be expected from the next Congress.

The Senate Committee on Judiciary will report favorably on Monday, in all probability, the resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution for the election of United States Senators by direct vote of the people. Senator Overman, who is a member of the committee, believes that a majority of the members will vote against the

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Depew amendment, which would give the Federal government control over the conduct of the Senatorial primaries. It is not so certain that this amendment can be defeated in open Senate, for it is being urged by those Senators opposed to the election of members of the Senate by popular vote. The effect of the Depew amendment would be to enfranchise the negro voters of the South so far as Senatorial primaries are concerned. It is needless to say that Southern Senators will be very much opposed to the proposed amendment. They have also been assured by Senator LaFollette and other progressive Republican Senators favoring the election of Senators by popular vote that they will join with them in voting down the Depew amendment. It will be a Democratic insurgent fight in behalf of the proposed amendment to the Constitution, and if it is killed by the present Senate, it is almost certain that it will be adopted by the Senate that meets next December.

Representative Thomas has not been well, and fearing exposure, he did not dare attempt the trip with the party that visited his district to celebrate the opening of the southern end of the inland waterway. Mr. Thomas is up and about, and attending to his duties.

Mr. W. A. Graham Clark, of Raleigh, has obtained a merited promotion in the government service. Several years ago, at the instance of Senator Overman, he was appointed a commercial agent in the Department of Labor and Commerce to investigate textile conditions abroad. He visited the Oriental countries, as well as those in South America and Europe. He did his work so well that he attracted the attention of the Tariff Board, and has received a position with that organization that pays him \$4,500 a year. Mr. Clark, who is a son of Chief Justice Walter Clark, is now in Washington. He is at work on textile schedules for the Tariff Board.

Miss Louise Beeson, of Lexington, is the guest of Miss Eunice Louise, at her home in this city.

FRUIT GROWER'S CREED.

The following creed was proposed by the fruit school of the extension department of the West Virginia University. It is a splendid one:

He who plants a fruit tree professes his faith. It is as if he should say: I believe.

I believe!

I believe in God and in the orderliness of His universe.

I believe in the regular procession of the seasons—spring and summer and autumn and winter.

I believe in the sure succession of youth and maturity.

I believe in the unfailing order of blossom-time and fruit-time.

I believe in the permanence of human needs.

I believe in the perpetuity of human institutions.

I believe in the steadfastness of Mother Earth, whose promise of food for her faithful children is a pledge that will not fail.

I believe in work as a divine gift. I believe in myself.

I believe!

And in this abiding faith I work. In this faith I plant this tree.

In this faith I will dig about its roots and nourish it.

In this faith I will protect it from vermin and disease.

In this faith I will wait for the early and the latter rain.

In this faith I will guard the blossom and the green fruit.

In this faith I will watch for the first blush of the ripening peach and the early tints of the maturing apple.

In this faith I will gather the first fruits with a thankful heart.

WITH THE DAIRY HERD.

The fault of dairymen in general is not so much the lack of knowledge as the proper application of the knowledge they possess.

One thing that we ought to consider when we start out to buy breeding cattle is the fact that the knowledge, skill and character of the man we buy them of is about as important as the animals that we are buying.

Can a man sow poor seed and hope to get a good crop? Will nature make any exceptions in one man's favor? These are questions which ought to interest the man who keeps on year after year breeding his cows to some scrub bull.

Too many farmers lack the push and energy required to build up a fine herd of dairy cattle. They are poor business men.

The cow cannot turn all of her energy into the production of milk and still have enough to build up her offspring rightly. To raise good, vigorous calves, we must see to it that the mother has sufficient of the right kind of food and goes dry long enough to do the work rightly.